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CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

ebruary—Month of Emphasis

February is the month when many things combine to turn our thoughts to our Christian social responsibility. The birthdays of Lincoln and Washington call to mind the importance of citizenship in its deepest and fullest nse. Race Relations Sunday and rotherhood Week dramatize the importance of good human relations. he beginning of Lent intensifies our onsciousness that Christianity is in nsion with the status quo and that iscipleship means taking up a cross. nd all of this means relating our hristian faith to the common life in more profound way than ever.

So it is most fitting that the United hurch of Christ has chosen February s the Month of Emphasis for Chrisan Social Action. We trust that by this time every church has adapted at least some of the suggestions for study and action presented in our December issue and ordered the materials which have been prepared — especially the attractive Silver Anniversary leaflet.

Especially this year, which marks the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, and the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the uniting General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (which early established a Commission on Christian Social Action), our churches should turn to God with thanksgiving for those who pioneered in enlarging our witness and with humble consecration to the social mission which confronts us today.

CONFERENCE UNDER ATTACK

The Fifth World Order Study Conerence convened by the National Counil of Churches was briefly reported on n the January issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY. Its Message has been idely quoted and has received deserved ttention as a document pointing both to he perils of the new world situation nd to promising resources for coping ith it.

At the same time, vocal individuals nd groups have attacked the Confernce, the Message, and the National Council of Churches for sponsoring such Conference. Many of these attacks ave centered on what purports to be he Conference's position on the question f the recognition of the Communist hinese People's Government by the nited States and by the United Naions. A "Committee of One Million" s conducting a fund-raising campaign ased, among other things, upon the laim that it is polling 50,000 Protestant lergymen upon these issues.

Concerning these attacks several hings need to be said.

For one thing, the question of China is only one of a number of issues on which the Conference spoke its mind. For example, the Message urges Christians to encourage their government to continued willingness to work for disarmament by multilateral agreement with satisfactory inspection and control of nuclear weapons.

The Conference Position

In the second place, with reference to China the Conference simply urged that our government reconsider its policy and take steps "*toward* the inclusion of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations and for its recognition by our government." The Conference did not call for unconditional recognition. It stated specifically that the rights of the people of Taiwan and of Korea should be safeguarded. It emphasized that such recognition would not imply approval and would be part of a much broader understanding. It assumed that most of these conditions and a

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WHAT HAPPENS AT AN INSTITUTE

By Edmonia Swanson

During July 1958 four Christian Social Action Institutes were sponsored by the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ at White Memorial Center, Mill Valley, California; Lakeland College, Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio; and the Massachusetts Congregational Conference Center at Framingham, Massachusetts.

The purpose of these institutes was to consider the bearing of Christian faith upon our common life and to help ministers, members of social action committees, and other church officials and interested lay people prepare for leadership in this aspect of the work of the churches.

Four institutes were held in order to make it convenient for members in all sections of the country to attend without having to travel too far. But primarily the same staff directed all four of the institutes by traveling from one locality to the next between Saturday and Monday. Thus all persons attending either of the four institutes received basically the same directions. But each institute might have taken on a slightly different bit of coloring according to group reaction.

For the last two summers I have attended the Midwest Institute held on the campus of Lakeland College, twelve miles from Sheboygan, Wisconsin. At the meeting this year over sixty persons attended. One fourth of the number were ministers of local churches. The remainder were Women's Fellowship and Women's Guild local, synod, and state chairmen, women and men from local church committees, Pilgrim and Youth Fellowship committee members. The group represented eight states. Some arrived as early as Monday night, but the program opened after lunch on Tuesday and closed after lunch on Saturday.

The first afternoon we were asked to

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Conference Under Attack

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timetable of action would need to be worked out.

In the third place, the Conference did not pretend to speak officially on behalf of the National Council of Churches or of the constituent denominations. Only the General Assembly or the General Board of the National Council can issue a policy statement for the Council. The General Board may or may not take action on the substance of the Message at a later meeting. It has already, without committing itself to any part of the Message, re-affirmed the *right* of the Conference to speak for itself. The delegates to the Conference, appointed by responsible officials in the denominations and in councils of churches, were under no mandate to express anybody's judgment but their own. They did not seek to *close* the discussion. Indeed, one major hope of the Conference was that it might *begin* a more general, open, informed, and courageous discussion of the issues bearing on the peace and security of the United States and the world.

Finally, the tactics used by the opposition say much about its character. Some of the individual clergymen who denounced the Conference have long kept aloof from cooperative Christian efforts to deal with the issues of Christian faith and life. The Committee referred to has prepared a letter containing unfair implications and a questionnaire that is not relevant to the position taken by the Conference. The fact that, of all the hundreds of newspaper accounts that might have been selected, it chose to reproduce and circulate only one clipped from the Communist weekly, *The Worker,* speaks volumes.

Prepare Study Program

Because the Council for Christian Social Action believes it is important that ministers and leaders in our churches should know what the Conference did and said, and be prepared to meet this high-powered misrepresentation, pastors and social action committee chairmen are receiving with this issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY a reprint from the *National Council Outlook* containing the story of the Conference and the Message. Other readers may secure this reprint on request for ten cents.

Special attention is called to the Nationwide Program for Peace. For use in this educational program—to be conducted in denominational training schools this summer, in councils of churches this fall, and in every local church next winter—resources are being prepared. These will include (1) a booklet containing the Message, Resolutions, and Section Reports, with questions for discussion; (2) the Background Papers, written by preparatory commissions, for the various sections; (3) a bibliography; and (4) a popular book on the Conference themes.

Local churches as well as synod, association and conference committees may well plan now to send representatives to our summer Christian social action institutes and to conduct a really serious study of international affairs in the light of our Christian faith.

NEWS OF LOCAL SOCIAL ACTION

THE PROBLEM OF THE MAGAZINES

Some of our social action committees have wondered what they could do about the problem of magazines, sold on newsstands, whose character they feel is a menace to the moral life of the community and especially to the well-being of young people.

Citizens of Lancaster, Pennsylvania have formed a *Clean Magazines Committee.* This committee is a non-sectarian group of citizens consisting of members of the clergy of several denominations, business and professional men, housewives and others, dedicated to the accomplishment of two objectives: (1) to obtain the voluntary cooperation of retail newsdealers in removing objectionable magazines from display, and in discontinuing the sale of objectionable magazines to those under eighteen years of age; (2) to promote the reading of good literature by people of all ages.

The Lancaster committee recently held a public meeting presenting as a speaker Mrs. Walter A. Craig, Chairman of Philadelphia's Citizens Committee Against Obscenity. Mrs. Craig, it is reported, has accomplished much and has gained the support of the District Attorney and most men's and women's organizations. As a result of the work of this committee some dealers have instituted a plan of self-policing and the menace, it is reported, has been substantially reduced.

The chairman of the Lancaster Clean Magazines Committee is Mr. Edmond J. Conway, 946 Salisbury Court, Lancaster, Pa. Readers of these paragraphs might be able to get further information by writing to Mr. Conway.

MILWAUKEE CHURCHES ACT FOR PEACE

The Milwaukee County Council of Churches, reports the Reverend R. H. Huenemann, has carried on an interesting type of education on international relations. It has produced a series of varicolored brief leaflets dealing with: "The Kingdom and the Peacemakers," "The Kingdom and U. S. Foreign Aid," "The Kingdom and Human Rights," and other related topics.

The Milwaukee Council's International Relations Committee also adopted a statement during last summer's Middle East crisis. This called for Christian repentance and for a program not only to meet the Arab nations' need for "food and water, medical and technical skill, education and social welfare" but to offer through UN agencies assistance in guiding them into economic health, stability, and self-reliance.

WORK ON MENTAL HEALTH

A letter from Mrs. Margaret L. Boettger of Kalamazoo, Michigan tells of a good program now being developed by a mental health education committee associated with the Kalamazoo County Council of Churches Social Action Committee.

The group plans a three-fold program: It starts with the preparation of a fact sheet concerning mental illness and its prevention in children; the responsibility fo the church for hospitalized mental patients; the church's responsibility of the church for hospital- This fact sheet will be circulated among all churches related to the county council of churches, and aid in interpretation will be offered to these churches as well as to women's clubs which indicate interest.

The churches of Kalamazoo have undertaken an extensive program of visitation in mental hospitals. Five hundred patients are now being served. This is not only of value to the patients but it has also increased understanding of mental illness among people of the churches involved in the program. The report from Kalamazoo indicates that couples who go together on their hos-

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.ocal News

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iital visits are pleased with what they eel they are accomplishing.

RGANIZE FOR INDUSTRIAL NDERSTANDING

Although Kansas, unlike the other tates in which the issue was voted on n the November elections, alone dopted a so-called "right-to-work" law, he Kansas Council for Industrial eace, organized to promote sound in-ustrial growth and good industrial re-tions, opposed the proposal. It did so n the basis that it would work to the urt of new and small unions, would rifle labor-management relations, and ring increasing strife as labor struggles o regain its lost bargaining status.

Active in this group and in the cam-aign was the Reverend Louis Poppe, astor of the Federated Church of Whitewater, Kansas. Mr. Poppe also elped to form a committee of Kansas dergy and educators opposed to the nti-union-shop amendment. These ef-orts may well have helped to shift senti-nent on the amendment from the two-nirds majority anticipated by previous olls to the four-three vote recorded on lection day. Perhaps not least signifi-ant is the fact that key lay leaders in he Whitewater Church, though per-onally differing from their pastor on he issue, defended and supported him n his right to take his position.

Ministers and leading churchmen in number of other states, including those f our own fellowship, also made public tatements interpreting the principles in-olved and cautioning against the notion hat such laws would, even if fair, be ffective in checking corrupt leadership.

RESENT MESSAGE

An unusual technique in presenting, tudying, and adopting a statement on Christian social action was tried at the all meeting of the Los Angeles Associa-ion of Congregational Churches. The ocial action committee, of which Clay-on H. Gill is chairman, sent to all elegates in advance a draft Message in-luding five sections — Introduction, Dealing with Controversy, Human Rights, International Relations, and Labor-Management Relations. Each ection contained from 3 to 7 brief tatement, usually a single sentence.

At the close of twenty minutes of dis-ussion there was a brief period of rayer. Then each delegate checked his ote "Yes" or "No" opposite each sen-ence according to his own conviction. A special committee then tabulated the otes and read the resulting Message t the business session.

Church Has Own Month of Emphasis

ED. NOTE: *Last May* CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY *reported on the October program emphasis at the Kirk of Bonnie Brae in Denver, Colorado. The sequel is described below by H. Merle Dorsett, chairman of the Board of Missions, which is responsible for missionary education and social action:*

As a result of the first experience and of the evaluation of the first program through a questionnaire sent to the members of the church, it was determined to have a second October program emphasis. The Board of Missions discussed possible program themes as early as last April. During May a meeting was held with officers of the various fellowship groups of the church.

After agreeing that these groups would recommend that their October programs be devoted to the overall theme, all participants helped to work out the theme—"The Problems of the Dispossessed" in our inner city, the migrants of our state, the American Indian in our nation, and the refugees in our world.

The Board of Missions and the minister, the Reverend Eugene Van Kranenburgh, then went to work to locate appropriate speakers and resource materials — pamphlets, films, etc. — in these areas. In early September a mimeographed list of resources was sent to the leaders of all groups within the church. Each group was free to choose the phase of the overall theme in which it wished to concentrate.

The Board of Missions acted as a coordinating and resource agency, assisting groups as desired. The month's plans were presented in an attractive leaflet which was distributed to the entire church membership in advance. A literature table of free materials covering all phases of the program was established.

Programs of the fellowships included discussions by a social worker member of the Kirk on "Family Problems within the Inner City," the director of Public Relations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Indian relocation program, and the Secretary of the Colorado Farm Placement Bureau and the Director of the Department of Migrant Ministry of the Colorado Council of Churches on migrant workers. The youth groups had programs appropriate to their interests.

Sermon themes for the month included sermons by the ministers on "Who Are the Dispossessed?", "Inner City Frontiers," and "Those without a Voice." On the last Sunday of the month a guest minister as well as a social worker, presented the sermon.

Perhaps partly as a result of the month's program emphasis, the following concrete activities have come about: the special Thanksgiving offering of the church included the Migrant Ministry of the Colorado Council of Churches and Share Our Surplus; the Christmas church school project will be that of collecting toys for the children's work of the Department of Migrant Ministry; a mothers' group has "adopted" a relocated Indian family having six children, has helped them with clothing, and at present is looking for an operating refrigerator for them. "Clean-up Kits" consisting of washcloth, soap, etc., are also being made by one church school class to send to migrant children.

A proposed trip to an Indian reservation by the minister and some of our high school youth did not work out, but is still a possibility for the future. It is hoped that a follow-up seminar on the problems of the inner city, involving resource people from various community agencies and groups, may be held in February. The church has a responsibility here which is not at present being adequately met in Denver.

This type of program is commended to other churches for consideration. If it is carefully planned on a pertinent theme, it offers the advantages of involving the total church in a serious study for a period of a month on a significant area of problems faced by Christians in our time and in our own communities.

NOT TOO LATE

It is not too late to consider joining the CCSA's Europe-Middle East or Mexican seminars. For information on the former, write to Rev. Herman F. Reissig, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, New York, and on the Mexican Seminar to Rev. F. Nelsen Schlegel, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

WHAT HAPPENS AT AN INSTITUTE –

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divide ourselves into four groups: local leaders, synod and conference chairmen of women's groups, chairmen of local social action committees, and chairmen of synod and conference social action committees. These groups worked together right through the institute.

Each morning we started our day by hearing a discussion on that day's subject by Dr. Elmer J. F. Arndt of Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri, who pointed up the day's subject as it related to our Christian faith. His topics were as follows:

Christian Faith Illumines Our Daily Work
Christian Faith Illumines Social Welfare Work
Christian Faith and Racial Justice
Christian Faith and International Affairs

The institute panels, discussions, movies and filmstrips also demonstrated methods that could be used in the local churches.

A large supply of material was available throughout the meeting, as was information as to the organizations that could supply material in the future.

The overall program was planned in such a way as to allow leisure time for a beach party, tours, and follow-ups on unfinished, heated discussions. The highlight on the informal side was the last evening when we were all guests of Dr. Arthur Krueger, president of the college, in his home. Lakeland College was an ideal location for the institute, as I imagine was true of each of the other sites.

Edmonia (Mrs. Hayes) Swanson of Chicago, Illinois, describes her vocation as "home executive," which perhaps indicates that the wage and hour laws do not apply to her work! She is chairman of the social action council of Park Manor Church, Woman's Gift chairman of the Chicago Association, and a member of the social action board of the Illinois State Conference of Congregational Christian Churches.

In addition to the opportunity that the institute offered to meet and know the staff of our Council for Christian Social Action, I am of the opinion that one of the most gratifying benefits received was the opportunity of personally meeting and living for the four days with people of different walks of life who perhaps under few other circumstances would have been brought together.

A special guest who contributed vitally to our understanding of both the world church and the world's problems was Dr. Masao Takenaka, professor of social ethics at Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan. He proved to be not only a specialist on economic problems but a popular participant in all institute activities.

In all, attending the institute was a very gratifying and worthwhile experience.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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News and Program Service of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ
Ray Gibbons, Director
Huber F. Klemme, Associate Director and Editor

Sent free to pastors and social action committee chairmen. Group subscription, 10 or more to one address, 50 cents each. Individual subscriptions, $2 per year with SOCIAL ACTION upon request.

General communications and orders from Evangelical and Reformed churches should be addressed to the Editor, Council for Christian Social Action, 2969 W. 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Congregational Christians should order from Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

The Council for Christian Social Action unites the work of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

DON MURRAY IN FILM ON "CO" CHOICES

The National Service Board for Religious Objectors has just released a 16-mm color sound motion picture entitled "Alternatives." Through a combination of art work and live sequences the film interprets the position of the conscientious objector and the types of national service presently being rendered by "CO's" in lieu of military training.

Don Murray, well known both for his movie career and for his own history as a conscientious objector, appears in the film and does the narration.

Prints may be rented from the Bureau of Audio-Visuals of the United Church at $7.50 for a single showing, or $20 per week.

SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR

February—United Church of Christ Month of Emphasis on Christian Social Action.
February 3-6 — Churchmen's Washington Seminar, Washington, D. C.
February 5-7—Council on Christian Social Action, Buck Hill Falls, Pa.
February 8—Race Relations Sunday.
April 7-9—United Church of Christ Washington Seminar.
June 22-26—West Coast Christian Social Action Institute, White Memorial Retreat Center, Mill Valley, Calif.
June 23 - August 1—CCSA Europe-Middle East Seminar.
June 28 - July 23—Summer School of Alcohol Studies, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
July 1-5—General Synod, Evangelical and Reformed Church, Oberlin, Ohio.
July 5-9—General Synod, United Church of Christ, Oberlin, Ohio.
July 9-11 — Council for Christian Social Action, Oberlin, Ohio.
July 13-17—Midwest Christian Social Action Institute, Lakeland College, Sheboygan, Wis.
July 20-24—Central Christian Social Action Institute, Congregational Center, Lisle, N. Y.
July 27-31—Eastern Christian Social Action Institute, Congregational Center, Framingham, Mass.
August 6-25—Mexican Study Seminar.

CHAIRMAN IN PRESENTATION

Dr. Henry C. Koch, President of the National Capital Area Council of Churches and Chairman of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church, recently participated in a panel discussion on "Democratic Practices in Our Economic Society."

The occasion was a Conference sponsored by the Religion and Labor Foundation at the Sheraton Park Hotel in Washington. Participating in the panel were Dr. Leon H. Keyserling, Director of the Conference on Economic Progress and former Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors; Arthur Goldberg, General Counsel of the Industrial Union Department (AFL-CIO) and secretary of its Ethical Practices Committee; and Rabbi Eugene Lipman, director of Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism.

The Conference preceded the dinner in which the annual Social Justice Award of the Religion and Labor Foundation was presented, this time to the AFL-CIO Ethical Practices Committee. Previous awards had been given to Senator Herbert H. Lehman, Father John LaFarge, Dr. Martin Luther King, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Bishop Francis J. McConnell, and other outstanding citizens.